

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5302

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 3771

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SF, US, PFOR

SUBJ: NEW DEPUTY TO HEAD SOUTH AFRICAN UN MISSION

1. WITHIN NEXT FEW WEEKS SAG PLANS TO TRANSFER CURRENT DEPUTY CHIEF OF SAG UN MISSION STEWARD TO PRETORIA, WHERE HE WILL BECOME NUMBER TWO ON THE NORTH AMERICAN DESK, AND THE PRINCIPAL WORKING LEVEL CONTACT WITH THE EMBASSY. HE REPLACES DAVID STEWARD WHO HAS BEEN TRANSFERRED FROM DFA TO OTTAWA.

2. COUNSELOR J.A. EKSTEEN, CURRENTLY ASSIGNED TO THE MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS DIVISION OF THE DFA, WILL BECOME DEPUTY CHIEF OF SAGUN. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT HE MAY PROCEED TO NEW YORK AS EARLY AS MID-SEPTEMBER TO BE PRESENT WHEN THE NAMIBIA ISSUE IS DEBATED, AND FOR A TRANSITION PERIOD PRIOR TO STEWARD'S DEPARTURE.

3. EKSTEEN HAS BEEN A VERY USEFUL CONTACT HERE. WHILE DISCREET AND TATALLY LOYAL TO SAG POLICIES, HE WISHES VERY MUCH TO SEE AN IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES AND THE WESTERN WORLD AND HAS BEEN NOTABLY

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MORE COOPERATIVE AND FORTHCOMING THAN MOST OF HIS

COLLEAGUES AT DFA. HE HAS DESCRIBED SPECIFIC INSTANCES IN WHICH, DURING INTERNAL DFA DISCUSSION OF SAG POLICY ON NAMIBIA IN PARTICULAR, HE HAS NOTED US POINTS OF VIEW AND THE UTILITY OF MOVING WHERE POSSIBLE TOWARD SATISFYING OR ACCOMMODATING THEM. HE HAS EARNED THE CONFIDENCE OF DFA SUPERIORS AND SENIOR SAG OFFICIALS. IN RECENT WEEKS HE ATTENDED SENSITIVE HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS CONCERNED WITH REPERCUSSIONS OF THE SAG RAID INTO ZAMBIA, AND HAS DRAFTED A NUMBER OF SPEECHES FOR MINISTERIAL LEVEL OFFICIALS ON UN AND NAMIBIA RELATED EVENTS. EKSTEEN HAS WORKED HERE IN CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH FORMER SAG AMBASSADOR TO US J.S.F. BOTHA. SENIOR DEPUTY SECRETARY DFA VAN DALSEN SAID THE ASSIGNMENT REFLECTED THE CONFIDENCE PLACED IN EKSTEEN THAT, AS A COMPETENT AND RISING PROFESSIONAL OFFICER, HE "COULD TAKE THE TOUGH KNOCKS WE HAVE TO EXPECT IN NEW YORK, AND MAINTAIN SOME BALANCE IN OUR POSTURE THERE...PIK BOTHA IS A POLITICAL MAN, YOU KNOW, AND ISN'T AS CONCERNED WITH SOME THINGS AS HE IS WITH OTHERS."

4. EKSTEEN IS IN HIS LATE THIRTIES AND IS OF AFRIKANER STOCK. HE AND HIS ATTRACTIVE WIFE ARE CHARMING SOCIAL COMPANIONS. SHE WILL REMAIN IN SOUTH AFRICA FOR SOME TIME, TO ACCOMMODATE EDUCATION TRANSITION PROBLEMS OF THEIR THREE CHILDREN, BEFORE JOINING HIM IN NEW YORK. THOUGH MORE LIBERAL IN HIS VIEWS THAN THE AVERAGE AFRIKANER, EKSTEEN APPEARS TO SUPPORT THE BASIC CONCEPT OF SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT WHILE ADVOCATING SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENTS FOR BLACKS AND A RAPID REDUCTION IN OTHER MANIFESTATIONS OF DISCRIMINATION.
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